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## WILD LIFE AND THE MOTOR CAR

On November 7, 1920, I motored from Austin to San Antonio, Texas, some 82 miles. On the road, evidently killed by motors travelling by night, were 4 cottontails, 2 dogs, 2 rats, 1 opossum, and 1 very large skunk. It is remarkable that the cottontail commonly suffers more than any other game animal from motor cars.—ERNEST THOMPSON SETON, *Greenwich, Conn.*

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## RECENT LITERATURE

Winge, Herluf. A REVIEW OF THE INTERRELATIONSHIPS OF THE CETACEA. Smithsonian Misc. Coll., vol. 72, no. 8, 97 pp., 1921. [Translated by Gerrit S. Miller, Jr., from Vidensk. Medd. fra Dansk naturh. Foren., Copenhagen, vol. 70, p. 59-152, 1918.]

The paper here translated is one of a series of studies by Doctor Winge on the orders of mammals. It commences with a brief statement of the supposed derivation of the group and an account of the more obvious ways in which the structure of cetaceans departs from that of land mammals as a result of a wholly aquatic existence. Following this, the major groups of the order are taken up in sequence, their chief characters are enumerated, and an attempt is made to trace a possible line of evolution for them.

The earliest known cetaceans appear in the Eocene, already equipped for living wholly in the water. They include several genera of zeuglodonts, and while some of these—*Basilosaurus* ("Zeuglodon")—had already reached the height of their development, there still survived at least one member of the group so primitive that the dentition is nearly unchanged from that of one of the creodonts (*Hyænodon*). This primitive genus—*Protocetus* from the Eocene of Egypt—is accepted by Winge as in the direct ancestry of the group which he calls Zeuglodontidæ, though others including its discoverer are not convinced that these are true cetaceans.

At the conclusion of the first half of the paper (p. 45) the author sums up his views. He recognizes six families of Cetacea, all of which however are not of equivalent value, namely: (1) the "Zeuglodontidæ" (= Basilosauridæ) to include these Eocene genera which he considers are unquestionably primitive cetaceans, and "must have made their appearance somewhere within the territory occupied by the hyænodonts, and probably in the oldest part of the territory." (2) The Balænidæ, in which he includes all whalebone whales, and believes them to be derived "from the more primitive genera" of zeuglodonts, a view at variance with that of Abel, who believes the Miocene *Patriocetus* offers a connecting link between toothed and baleen species. Gregory also suggests the comparatively recent origin of the group. (3) The Squalodontidæ, whose members he would have spring "from the most primitive, tooth-bearing balænids," a view for which it is difficult to see any satisfactory basis. Both True and Abel agree in placing the Oligocene *Agorophius* (for which Abel makes a separate family) as a near ancestor of the squalodonts. (4) The Platanistidæ, considered "the descendants of the primitive squalodonts." Here are included the four living genera *Steno-*

*delphis*, *Lipotes*, *Inia*, and *Platanista*, long-beaked river-dolphins. The combination of characters exhibited by at least three of these genera has made their classification a matter of much controversy. While at variance with the latest views of Abel and of True, there is much to commend the close association of the other genera named with *Platanista* instead of making a special family for them. True's final conclusion, however, was that *Stenodelphis* might best be included as a member of the Delphinidæ. (5) The Delphinidæ, which Winge believes to have branched off early in the Tertiary, from "primitive platanistids." The family is a somewhat heterogeneous assemblage, and its final constitution is still unsettled. (6) The Physteridæ, including the ziphioids as a subfamily, which are supposed by Winge to have "originated from the most primitive delphinids" during early Tertiary time, but as no members of the latter group are known before the Miocene, it is not clear what the ancestry would be like.

Although it must be confessed that the brief arguments for these "derivations" are not in all cases very convincing, yet the discussion brings out the fact of a general similarity in fundamental structure throughout the order, so that, although there is as yet no unanimity of opinion as to the precise relationships of many known genera, it does seem possible to perceive how some of the special peculiarities of various groups may have been evolved. An important section of the paper is contained in the second part—Notes,—which, besides brief discussion of controversial points, contains references to the more important literature on the order.

The translation has been done with care, even to the reproduction of the author's emendations (e.g., *Rhachionectes* for *Rhachianectes*, *Xiphius* for *Ziphius*, etc.), and with a view to giving "the author's ideas as clearly and exactly as possible rather than to make smooth English sentences." Much credit is due the translator for making this important summary now readily available in English.

—Glover M. Allen.

**Osgood, Wilfred H.** A MONOGRAPHIC STUDY OF THE AMERICAN MARSUPIAL, *CÆNOLESTES*. Field Mus. Nat. Hist., Zoöl. Ser., vol. 14, no. 1, pp. 1-162; 22 plates. May, 1921.

The curious South American marsupial *Cænolestes* has been the subject of much discussion, and has been placed in three different suborders by various workers who have dealt with its systematic position. Osgood's extended descriptive account of its anatomy, and the conclusions based on his researches are, therefore, of great interest to all technical mammalogists.

The introductory sections include the general history of *Cænolestes* from its discovery in 1860 up to the present time, what little is known of its habits, and an account of its external characters. Following this, in the main body of the work, are detailed descriptions of the myology (pp. 22-61), urogenital system, alimentary canal, glands, respiratory and circulatory systems (pp. 61-77), skeleton and teeth (pp. 77-128). Additional chapters of special interest are: The origin or diprotodonty, relationships of *Wynyardia*, relationships of *Myrmecoboides*, phylogeny and taxonomy, and dispersal of marsupials. These all show the intensive study, clear reasoning, and fair presentation of the subject that we have learned to expect in the author's publications. A diagram of the phylogenetic